

Sports Development Planning

Writing a Sports Development Plan

Background .

What is Sports Development?

Fundamentally, sports development is about providing opportunities for people of all ages, regardless of gender, race or ability, to participate in sport at a level that is appropriate to their ability – from beginner to world class performer.

Quite simply it is about creating pathways and setting up structures that enable sports performers to get started, keep going, get better and be the best!

Why Plan?

Writing a sports development plan can often help a region and its clubs to focus its efforts and ensure that everyone is working together in striving towards the same goal and a shared vision. It can help ensure that resources are maximised, priorities identified and a duplication of work is avoided.

What is a Sports Development Plan?

A sports development plan is a clear and concise document that outlines an organisation's goals and how they will be achieved .

It does not need to be a long and complex document, but essentially needs to answer three questions:

- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to be?**
- **How are we going to get there?**

Who can help?

When writing a sports development plan it is important it is not done in isolation. There are many agencies and organisations that are involved in sports development that can help, support and advise. County Sports Partnerships, National Governing Bodies and most Local Authorities employ sports development officers who are responsible for providing and creating opportunities for everyone to participate in sport at their chosen level.

Where are we now?

Before you can move forward, you need to determine a starting point in order to identify the progress that your region will make. Identifying this starting point can help establishing exactly where you would like to be in the future.

The information you could gather could include:

- The number and qualifications of coaches
- The number of volunteers, their skills and training needs
- Links with the County Sports Partnership, Local Authority Sports Development Officers, National Governing Body Officers local school and community groups.
- Facilities and equipment available
- Number of members and number of people who regularly attend sessions
- Reasons why some people decide not to maintain their participation
- Potential participants (number of people in the district)
- Breakdown of local people using Active People data ie BME Communities, women, young people etc..
- Strengths (and weaknesses) of the region - a SWOT analysis
- Number of local schools and community groups in the area that have skied/boarded at a recreational level that can be encouraged back into the fold

Other information could include marketing, competitive structures, finance etc.

Where would you like to be?

The starting point for any sports development plan is to understand exactly what you are trying to achieve – ie

Having a clear vision for your region.

You need to decide what you would like to offer to your member clubs in the future and what you would like to do better or differently.

It is worth spending some time on this even though at first glance, it may appear to be a simple and straightforward task. A simple vision statement could simply be:

'To raise the profile and standard of snowsports in x named region'
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How will you get there?

Once you have agreed a common vision for the region, you need to break down what that statement means and how you can make it a reality through setting specific aims, goals and tasks.

It needs to be broken down into bite-sized objectives and placed in order of priority. It is also helpful to identify some short, medium and long term goals that the region and its members can work towards to ensure everyone stays motivated.

The aim describes what you will do, the objective how you are going to do it. The objectives need to be **SMART**

- **S**pecific (specify what you want to achieve)
- **M**easurable (are you able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not?)
- **A**chievable (are the objectives achievable and attainable?)
- **R**ealistic (can the objectives realistically be achieved with the resources you have?)
- **T**imed (when do you want to achieve the set objectives?)

NOTE: with the latter point, don't try and cram everything into the first 6 months of the plan... spread the work out over the lifespan of the plan.

Realistically a plan should be set over anything between a 3- 5 year period. The first year of the plan should be very detailed but the subsequent years can be headlines and rough ideas. Situations change in sport and new opportunities appear which may cause your region to change direction to take advantage. A Plan therefore, should ideally be a 1 year rolling document, reviewed at least annually. This keeps it fresh and allows the region to respond/react to changes in the world around it.

Into Action

When producing the development plan you will need to break it down and determine who will take responsibility, what they will do, where they will do it and by when. You should also consider the resources and budget that the objectives might incur.

Monitoring the progress

As mentioned above, a sports development plan is a working document that needs to be annually reviewed. It can be used to:

- raise the profile of your region and its constituent clubs,
- to inform the local sports networks of your intentions,
- as a publicity tool to help seek and secure funding and
- as a means of informing others of their plans and progress.

Reviewing the plan can help you to keep moving forward and decide what direction to take next. A good plan will be flexible enough to accommodate changes and include new opportunities. Planning is an on-going process that needs to be continually reviewed through a rolling process of

Plan - Do - Review.

Below, you will find a template for a sports development plan which includes the key areas that regionally you might want to include. These take into account, the priorities identified in the Whole Sport Plan which was successful in gaining funding from Sport England.

Snowsports Development Plan Template

1. Your vision may be very specific or aim to make snowsports more accessible to more people. Try to summarise these ideas into a clearly defined vision, something that will inspire the people around you.
2. You also need to take into account the Snowsport Whole Sport Plan (WSP) - a summary of which is attached to this document in Powerpoint format, and work with Snowsport England to coordinate development across the country.
3. This does not exclude regional variations ie there may be funding/facilities/partners in your region that open up specific opportunities for you to develop something unique. However, you must not lose sight of the overall WSP and its objectives as in the end, Snowsport England as a whole, will be judged by Sport England on how it has achieved the targets set out in the Plan.

Your Region's Vision

Eg. **To Raise the Profile and standards of Snowsports in x named region**

The next stage is to split your vision up into objectives and work with the clubs and partners in your region to assess how realistic these are to achieve.

There are 3 Interventions outlined in the WSP:

- Increasing Participation and membership
- Clubs and Coaching
- Performance pathway and talent identification

If we take **intervention 1 – Increasing Participation and Membership**, areas that your region could focus on include:

- Raise awareness of the opportunities for extended activities to PDM's, SSCO's, sports development officers & CSP's
- Increasing participation from disadvantaged inner city areas & BME communities.

- Widening the breadth of activities offered to include freestyle, skier cross, snowboarding, Nordic
- Developing and/or strengthening links with state schools
- Reviewing your existing communication systems to become more accessible to local people
- Supporting the development of new clubs where applicable.

If we therefore take this area as an example, an objective under Intervention 1 could look like this:

1. Increasing Participation and Membership				
Objective: Develop links with state schools				
Target	How	Who	Resources	When
Organise an open day for schools at 2 facilities	Liaise with centre management to identify appropriate days and rates	Regional Chair	Regional budget	October 2010
	Publicise event to all schools within the ski centre's catchment area	Regional Committee/ski centre	Regional publicity budget	
	Follow up publicity with visits and address at school assemblies	Regional Committee	As above/ volunteers	
	Work with PDM and SSSCo's for the area	Region and local clubs		
	Organise special competition on day plus introductory training for non skiers/boarders	Region/local club(s)	Regional budget Sponsorship Awards For All grant	
	Organise demonstration event by region's talented young skiers	Regional Squad members	Regional coaches	
Follow up with schools post event	Contact schools and SSSCo's for feedback through simple questionnaire	Publicity officer		
	Establish special joining rate for schools to region	Regional Committee	Regional/club budgets	
	Identify talented skiers	Regional/club coaches		

	from schools and fast track them			
	Investigate follow up activities eg schools competition	PDM's/schools/coaches		March 2011

The key thing to remember under '**How**' is to break the activity down into 'bite sized' chunks which are manageable and achievable. So under each of the areas identified e.g. '**Publicise event to all schools within the ski centre's catchment area**' there are additional tasks that need to be performed such as

- Organising publicity
- Establishing school's database
- Identifying key contacts in each school
- Agreeing format and timing of the day

This needs to be done for each area that you have identified. Some may be very straightforward and involve only one task, others more complicated and involving a number of tasks.

This format should be used for each of the subsequent objectives you have identified under the Snowsport Interventions in the WSP.

Each of the clubs in your region should also be encouraged to have development plans in place which link into the regional plan. In this way there is coordination across the whole area of Snowsports and everyone knows that they are working towards the same objectives. The details in each club plan will differ according to local geography and circumstances, but the overall aims should be similar.

KEY

WSP – Whole Sport Plan – Snowsport England's funding bid to Sport England

CSP - County Sports Partnership – A strategic body at a county level which coordinates the development of sport in its geographical area in partnership with a wide range of other bodies such as local authorities, schools, health authorities, governing bodies of sport and local clubs.

PDM – Partnership Development Manager – usually based in the main secondary school (Could be a Specialist Sports College) and covers a partnership area of other secondary schools and feeder primary schools.

SSCo – School Sport Coordinator – report to the PDM – 1 based in each Partnership school

BME – Black and minority ethnic communities – also includes the newly arrived immigrants from the Accession 8 countries of Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, The Czech Republic, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.